

# Bulletin of the BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

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The seven hundred and forty-eighth Meeting of the Club was held in the Senior Common Room, Sheffield Building, Imperial College, London, S.W.7, on Tuesday, 5 July 1983 at 7 p.m. The attendance was 17 Members and 8 guests.

*Members present were:* B. GRAY (*Chairman*), Major N. A. G. H. BEAL, Mrs DIANA BRADLEY, P. A. BROWN, D. R. CALDER, R. D. CHANCELLOR, N. J. CROCKER, J. H. ELGOOD, A. GIBBS, D. GRIFFIN, Revd. G. K. McCULLOCH, Dr J. F. MONK, J. G. PARKER, R. E. F. PEAL, S. A. H. STATHAM, N. H. F. STONE and Dr D. H. THOMAS. *Guests present were:* D. BRADLEY, Miss D. J. BULLEY, P. ESPIN, P. GORIUP, T. A. M. JACK, Mrs I. McCULLOCH, M. MORTON and J. A. RANDALL.

Mr Paul Goriup spoke in general on "Bustards", describing briefly the species in this family, many of them little studied, and the threats to their survival. He spoke especially of the Houbara *Chlamydotis undulata*, and of the attempts, mostly unsuccessful, to breed it in captivity because of its heavy mortality from falconry.

The seven hundred and forty-seventh Meeting of the Club was held in the Senior Common Room, South Side, Imperial College, London, S.W.7, on Tuesday, 17 May 1983 at 7 p.m. The attendance was 29 Members and 12 guests.

*Members present were:* B. GRAY (*Chairman*), Capt. Sir THOMAS BARLOW, P. J. BELMAN, K. F. BETTON, Dr G. BEVEN, Mrs DIANA BRADLEY, P. A. BROWN, D. R. CALDER, P. J. CONDER, Dr G. W. H. DAVISON, J. H. ELGOOD, Sir HUGH ELLIOTT, D. J. FISHER, A. GIBBS, D. GRIFFIN, P. HOGG, J. KING, Revd. G. K. McCULLOCH, Dr J. F. MONK, P. J. OLIVER, R. E. F. PEAL, R. PRITCHETT, P. S. REDMAN, Prof. G. H. N. SETON-WATSON, Dr D. W. SNOW, S. A. H. STATHAM, N. H. F. STONE, C. E. WHEELER and Lieut.-Col. T. C. WHITE. *Guests present were:* J. BARRATT, Mrs G. BEVEN, O. J. H. DAVIES, P. ESPIN, Mrs I. McCULLOCH, Mrs P. J. OLIVER, K. A. ROBERTS, Mrs P. L. E. ROBERTS, Miss LUCY SETON-WATSON, Mrs BARBARA SNOW and Mrs C. E. WHEELER.

Dr D. W. Snow gave an erudite address on "Hummingbirds in the Colombian Andes". He described the altitudinal sequence of temperature levels in the mountains, which about 20 species of hummingbirds inhabited in any of 3 mountain ranges up to c. 9000 ft, but fewer above the tree line. Evolution of the hummingbirds had been very recent and he described some of their many ecological adaptations, including those of species which fed on flowers without nectar.

## Five bird species new for Thailand

by Philip D. Round

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This paper describes sightings of 5 bird species hitherto unrecorded for Thailand and made in Chiangmai Province during 1980-82. The names of the observers concerned follow the sighting details, except in cases where the author made the sighting alone.

### BURMESE YUHINA *Yuhina humilis*

A single individual was seen in the canopy of hill evergreen forest at c. 1100 m, near the summit of Doi Mon Chong (17° 31'N, 98° 36'E) on 10 and 11 March 1982. In shape, it appeared identical to the Whiskered Yuhina *Yuhina flavicollis*, showing a distinctive high, pointed crest. It had the same dark moustachial stripe but lacked the bright ferruginous collar and differed

in showing white, not fulvous brown, under tail coverts and grey, not brownish, streaks on the flanks. In particular it showed an ashy-grey partial collar, visible on the sides of the neck, a feature that is not mentioned in the literature, but which was present on skins of *Y.b. humilis* and *Y.b. clarki* examined at the British Museum (Nat. Hist.).

The Burmese Yuhina is known only from the southern Shan States and northern Tenasserim in Burma (Smythies 1953). Listed by King *et al.* (1975) as a full species, it is usually treated as a subspecies of *Y. flavicollis* (e.g. Peters 1964). It may occur in Thailand as a winter visitor, but most tropical *Timaliidae* are sedentary and it is more likely that the Burmese Yuhina is a hitherto overlooked resident breeder on Doi Mon Chong. The extreme southwest of Chiangmai Province is comparatively remote and has received little attention from ornithologists.

#### THRUSHES *Turdidae*

Most thrushes *Turdus* spp. which winter in Thailand appear to show irregular and irruptive patterns of occurrence. Though the Eye-browed Thrush *T. obscurus* is a very common visitor to the hill forests of N. Thailand, its numbers vary from year to year. When plentiful, flocks of *T. obscurus* may be joined by small numbers of scarcer species such as Grey-winged Blackbirds *T. boulboul* and Grey-sided Thrushes *T. feae*. In January–February 1980 and 1982 there were significant irruptions of thrushes, amongst which 3 *Turdus* spp. new for Thailand were found.

#### CHESTNUT THRUSH *Turdus rubrocanus*

Up to 15 were present in hill evergreen forest on Doi Inthanon (18° 35'N, 98° 29'E) from at least 18 January 1980 (H. Flotow, R. de la Moussaye) and a maximum of 35 was noted on 1 March (D. S. Melville). In 1982, up to 3 birds were present near the summit of Doi Inthanon (2590 m) between 1 January and 3 February, while a solitary individual was seen near the summit of Doi Pui (18° 50'N, 98° 53'E; 1685 m) on 14 January (A. Moon *et al.* and author). All showed the dark grey head of the race *T.r. gouldii*, which breeds in the mountains of western China and which winters in S.E. Tibet and northern Burma (Ali & Ripley 1973, Cheng 1976).

#### RED-THROATED THRUSH *Turdus ruficollis ruficollis* and BLACK-THROATED THRUSH *T. r. atrogularis*

Four *T. r. ruficollis*, an adult ♂, adult ♀ and 2 immatures were present on the summit of Doi Inthanon on 9 January 1982. Three immature birds were still present in this area on 3 February 1982 (P. A. Coe, G. Walbridge and author). Solitary males of *T. r. atrogularis* were seen on Doi Pui at c. 1500 m on 2 and 5 February 1982 (D. Johnston and G. Walbridge).

Both races of *T. ruficollis* breed in northern Asia, wintering from the western Himalayas to western China (Ali & Ripley, Cheng). Although *T. r. ruficollis* is the commoner form found wintering in Burma, it appears to be restricted to the northeast. *T. r. atrogularis* is more widely distributed and has been found closer to Thailand, in the southern Shan states (Smythies).

#### DUSKY THRUSH *Turdus naumanni eumomus*

Three were seen on Doi Inthanon on 18 February 1980 (C. Byers, M. Chapman). In January 1982, a remarkable influx occurred, with at least 17 birds on the summit of Doi Inthanon on 1 January (A. Moon *et al.*) and over 100 from 9 January to at least 3 February. Eye-browed Thrushes were

locally outnumbered, at least around the summit, no more than about 20 feeding in berry bushes and on the forest floor alongside the Dusky Thrushes, with one or two Long-tailed Ground Thrushes *Zoothera dixonii* and the small numbers of Red-throated and Chestnut Thrushes mentioned above. Groups of 1-5 Dusky Thrushes were encountered lower down the mountain at several sites during this period. In addition, 1-2 birds were seen on Doi Pui, Doi Pha Hom Pok (20° 05'N, 99° 10'E) and near Doi Mon Chong and also in a lowland marshy area near Ban Tha Thon (20° 03'N, 99° 20'E) between 14 January and 9 March (P. A. Coe, G. Walbridge and author). The Dusky Thrush breeds in northeast Asia and winters in northern India, southwest China, northeast and southern Burma (Ali & Ripley, Cheng, Smythies).

#### ROSY PIPIT *Anthus roseatus*

Two were located on an area of newly-flooded rice paddies near Ban Tha Thon on 29 December, and up to 15 were present in an adjacent marshy area with open muddy pools, 2-27 February (P. A. Coe, G. Walbridge and author). Four individuals, including one in breeding dress, were collected on 26 February and the specimens deposited in the collection of Dr. Boonsong Lekagul, Bangkok. Three of them, still in winter plumage, showed moult of body feathers and tertials, and 2 were growing central tail feathers. Up to 5 were also present in fields of wet rice stubble at Fang, 20 km to the south, 14 December 1981 to 2 January 1982 (G. J. Speight, J. M. Turton and author).

In winter plumage, the Rosy Pipit has more coarsely streaked upperparts and underparts than the Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*, and also lacks the streaked rump of *A. cervinus*. In addition *A. roseatus* has a markedly greyish-olive cast to the upperparts, recalling the Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*. However, the Rosy Pipit may be readily distinguished from both these species, which are common winter visitors to Thailand, by its flight call, which appears indistinguishable from that of the Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*.

The Rosy Pipit is a common breeding visitor to the Himalayas and the mountains of western China. It winters in the Himalayan foothills, southern China and is also known in the plains of W, N.E., Central and E. Burma (Ali & Ripley, Cheng, Smythies). In Thailand, it has probably hitherto been overlooked and may be a frequent, though local, winter visitor to the plains of the extreme north. We found none in paddyfields closer to the city of Chiangmai, about 130 km further south, during December to February.

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